

Cemetery Trustee Meeting Minutes
August 8, 2023, 1:00 pm
Protectworth Room

Meeting called to order 1:00 pm by Chairman Brandt Denniston.

Members present- Brandt Denniston, Chairman, Gardner Yenawine, Bookkeeper, Lynette Johnson, Trustee, Jeremiah Crosby, Selectboard Representative, Tim Hayes, Road Agent and Tamara Butcher, Town Administrator

Copies of the August agenda with expense reports and July Minutes passed out to those present.

New Road Agent- Tim Hayes Road Agent introduced himself and his role in the town of Springfield and experience working with cemetery committees and as sexton for a nearby town.

Financials- Review of expense reports. Row markers – Original estimate was for \$100 for purchase of row markers and caps. Actual cost was \$128.24 for #100 row markers #100 orange row marker caps. Lynette made a motion to amend the motion from \$100 to \$130 for purchase. Gardner seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion approved. Tim Hayes recommends that these be placed flush with the ground to avoid damage from mower.

Cemetery Website update- New rules and regulations are now on the website. These have also been sent to Chadwick's and Newton-Bartlett Funeral Homes. Copy to Tim Hayes as well.

Section and Row Layout- Brandt has measured the west side section of the cemetery and the 14 ft. wide service roads on the map are actually 13 ft. Brandt provided a map of the actual measurements. Plans are to place green flags for where the markers will be placed. Rows will be 91 feet long. PVC markers are to the right of the edge road by 2 feet as a buffer. Some sections are not 20 feet wide as on the map but instead measure as 19 feet. This means that we may lose one foot of either the section road or the two-foot walkway between lot sections. It was agreed that it would make more sense for the section road to remain at 13 feet to accommodate equipment for digging. Tim will see if he can maneuver the equipment after the flags are laid out. Brandt and Lynette to set flags out on August 12.

Fees- Discussion around the number of people who can be placed into a lot. Some lots can be sold as eight person lots for \$550 or only one person lot for \$200. Tim mentioned that to place eight full burials in one lot the space will be tight for digging when you include the vaults for full burials. Discussion around burial fees at local cemeteries and request for Tim to determine if current fees fairly cover the cost of digging, fuel and labor for each of the three types of burial; full burial, cremation and green burial.

Gravestone Repair- The Trustees of the Trust fund have been notified of the gravestone repair estimates. Gardner will give them specific cost for any graves with a trust fund for repair. Only earnings can be used and not principal. Each deed has specifics for how that trust fund is to be used. Kai Nalenz

Gravestone Services of New England expects to start repairs in September. The poor summer weather has not been conducive to this work.

Green Burial Release - Brandt explained that in lieu of a green burial release some towns include a clause in their rules and regulations explaining that the Cemetery is not responsible for any damage that occurs to a body for a green burial. Concerns about increased maintenance after severe rain were discussed.

New lots- Gardner reported that two lots have been deeded and there is another inquiry into a lot purchase. Discussion around the format for the lot purchase process document. Gardner to add town of Springfield and Pleasant View Cemetery to heading of document and present at next meeting for motion to accept.

Recordkeeping- Gardner suggested we close the current books as they are confusing as to documentation. Over the years several trustees have recorded deeds in different ways. We should start a new book going forward with a clearly understood process for recordkeeping.

Dutchman Pond Cemetery- Tim suggests that the cemetery trustees do a walk though of this cemetery as it is in rough shape. It is mowed twice a year by the town of Springfield. There are several cracked and falling gravestones there.

Cemetery Custodian- Tim explained the role of custodian including maintenance of the grounds, mowing and minor repair of tilting gravestones but no actual repair of stones. The RSA says we need to appoint a custodian. Tim is hoping to hire two more employees. Once he has a full crew the duties will be split among the highway department. Tabled until next meeting so Tim can speak with the Selectman about this at their meeting to clarify this.

Funds for corner markers on older graves- Discussion around ways to raise funds for corner markers on lots purchased prior to the new prices that includes the cost of corner markers. Brandt mentioned fund raising similar to that done for the cost of the lift in the meeting house. Tamara suggested that we find out how much money is needed to accomplish the task and ask for more funding to cover this in our next budget request. Another option is to write a warrant article to have the fees for lots go into the cemetery coffers for maintenance. Currently, any revenue from lot fees goes into the town general fund. The cemetery budget has remained the same for over fifteen years per Tamara.

Motion to Adjourn - Motion made by Gardner to adjourn at 2:25 pm. Next meeting September 12th at 1 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Lynette Johnson, trustee